

Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Retail Sales* Statistics Users Respondent Base

U.S. Census Bureau
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

(1) Monthly

0.3%;	1	None
100.0%;	366	Retail Sales
54.6%;	200	Wholesale Trade
55.5%;	203	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
64.2%;	235	Housing Starts
56.3%;	206	Building Permits
52.5%;	192	New Home Sales
43.2%;	158	Value of New Construction Put in Place
30.6%;	112	Housing Completions
24.6%;	90	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
34.7%;	127	New Residential Construction
16.4%;	60	New Mobile Home Placements
41.3%;	151	Monthly Imports and Exports
42.6%;	156	Current Industrial Reports
46.4%;	170	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

Replies 366; Forms 366

(2) Quarterly

59.5%;	94	Quarterly Financial Report
78.5%;	124	Current Industrial Reports
4.4%;	7	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
14.6%;	23	Quarterly Tax Survey
7.6%;	12	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

Replies 158; Forms 366

(3) Annual

78.3%;	256	Annual Retail Trade
48.6%;	159	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
20.5%;	67	Annual Survey of Communications
25.4%;	83	Transportation Annual Survey
26.0%;	85	Service Annual Survey
54.1%;	177	County Business Patterns

28.4%;	93	ZIP Code Business Patterns
35.2%;	115	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
26.6%;	87	Characteristics of New Housing
38.8%;	127	Annual Building Permits
23.2%;	76	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
25.7%;	84	Annual Capital Expenditures
59.0%;	193	Annual Survey of Manufactures
44.6%;	146	Current Industrial Reports
16.2%;	53	Research and Development Survey
24.5%;	80	Plant Capacity Utilization
7.0%;	23	Education Finance Survey
11.6%;	38	State Tax Collection Survey
5.2%;	17	Annual Public Employee Retirement
9.8%;	32	Annual Survey of Public Employment
9.8%;	32	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
18.3%;	60	State Government Finances
36.1%;	118	Annual Imports and Exports

Replies 327; Forms 366

II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

87.6%;	317	Printed Publications	16.0%;	58	FAX
74.6%;	270	World Wide Web (Internet)	12.4%;	45	Direct (E-mail) delivery
30.1%;	109	CD-ROMs	1.9%;	7	Regular mail
20.2%;	73	Diskettes	9.1%;	33	Other

Replies 362; Forms 366

- Magnetic Tape
- EBB (of Stat-USA) Phone calls
- visit to Census release library and requests to commerce library.
- Newspaper
- Economic Bulletin Board
- from others in the organization we use ftp site extensively.
- Would prefer receiving printed schedules to let me know what data is available via internet.
- News media
- Commerce Department Economic Bulletin Board
- tape (CPB)
- Electronic "Bulletin Boards"
- I've stopped tracking data
- Check values by telephone
- also use microfiche in some cases.
- time-share vendor (private)
- Bulletin Board Commerce Dept.
- Economic Bulletin Board-Commerce Dept.
- Analytics
- News Services-Market News.
- DRI DATABASE
- Internet, ProNet
- Download from Bulletin Board.3

- sec,Secondary Vendor (R
- Newswires
- Fax from Japanese media
- Stat-USA
- Tape, Cartridge
- STAT-Usa Bulletin Board
- EBB//Electronic Bulletin Board
- Overnight Delivery of NIA data
- CDROM & Publications in Library
- Subscribe to America Statistic Index on Microfiche
- News Recall Services-i.e. Dow Jones Reuters
- STAT-USA+WEFA Group

(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

68.1%; 233 Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
 25.1%; 86 ASCII delimited
 24.6%; 84 Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
 19.3%; 66 ASCII flat files
 17.3%; 59 Do not manipulate data
 15.2%; 52 Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually
 2.9%; 10 Other

Replies 342; Forms 366

- Sas data sets
- download from www.Census.gov
- Change to landscape small font 9
- to be determined
- Text files: txt. or PRN
- Excel
- PDF formats were the best
- PDF Files
- Word Document

4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

43.4%; 138 5	16.7%; 53 3	8.5%; 27 1
17.9%; 57 4	6.3%; 20 2	7.2%; 23 Don't know

Replies 318; Forms 366

(7) b. E-mail notification:

44.3%; 137 5	15.9%; 49 3	8.1%; 25 1
15.5%; 48 4	7.8%; 24 2	8.4%; 26 Don't know

Replies 309; Forms 366

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

52.3%;	160	5	14.4%;	44	3	5.9%;	18	1
18.3%;	56	4	2.6%;	8	2	6.5%;	20	Don't know

Replies 306; Forms 366

(9) d. Search:

69.3%;	228	5	10.0%;	33	3	2.1%;	7	1
14.3%;	47	4	1.8%;	6	2	2.4%;	8	Don't know

Replies 329; Forms 366

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

66.7%;	212	5	10.4%;	33	3	1.9%;	6	1
13.5%;	43	4	4.7%;	15	2	2.8%;	9	Don't know

Replies 318; Forms 366

(11) f. Download selected data:

75.2%;	248	5	5.2%;	17	3	1.2%;	4	1
13.6%;	45	4	3.0%;	10	2	1.8%;	6	Don't know

Replies 330; Forms 366

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

20.8%;	61	5	28.7%;	84	3	11.6%;	34	1
17.7%;	52	4	14.3%;	42	2	6.8%;	20	Don't know

Replies 293; Forms 366

(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

34.8%;	106	5	19.0%;	58	3	15.4%;	47	1
17.4%;	53	4	10.2%;	31	2	3.3%;	10	Don't know

Replies 305; Forms 366

(14) i. Charts and graphs:

28.2%;	88	5	17.9%;	56	3	15.7%;	49	1
20.2%;	63	4	14.4%;	45	2	3.5%;	11	Don't know

Replies 312; Forms 366

(15) j. Geographic maps:

29.4%;	88	5	16.1%;	48	3	17.4%;	52	1
18.4%;	55	4	12.4%;	37	2	6.4%;	19	Don't know

Replies 299; Forms 366

(16) k. Other, please specify:

68.2%; 15 electronic bulletin board 31.8%; 7 Other

Replies 22; Forms 366

- Publications like QFR to be in spreadsheet format or mdb for easy data manipulation after downloading.
 - Structure and specialists available to help researchers find data.
 - Dowlad selected data set according to state, regions, & metro areas
 - Internet site very important to receive data from.
 - Don't know if electronic bulletin board was used
 - electronic
 - Update full report at release time
-

(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

0.0%; 0 5	0.0%; 0 3	0.0%; 0 1
0.0%; 0 4	100.0%; 1 2	0.0%; 0 Don't know

Replies 1; Forms 366

III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

30.1%; 103 No 69.9%; 239 Yes

Replies 342; Forms 366

(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

63.1%; 221 5+ years	42.9%; 150 trends up to 1 year
62.6%; 219 trends up to 5 years	0.0%; 0 Other
45.1%; 158 latest 1 or 2 periods	

Replies 350; Forms 366

(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

51.6%; 179 Create value-added products/services
42.1%; 146 Perform patron/client inquiries
23.9%; 83 Inform marketing decisions
22.2%; 77 Republish in newspaper/journal
20.2%; 70 Inform investment decisions
18.4%; 64 Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
6.1%; 21 Locate new sites
0.3%; 1 Other

Replies 347; Forms 366

- Store data in database.

(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

75.4%; 257 Definition of terms
54.3%; 185 Narrative text describing survey results
51.9%; 177 Sampling and estimation methodology
37.2%; 127 Survey design
11.7%; 40 None
2.3%; 8 Other

Replies 341; Forms 366

- Explanations of data changes/revisions
 - frequency and availability
 - Not really using on Web.
 - short trend summary is extremely helpful-where possible.
 - Direct contact with Census analysts
 - Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
 - Regression analysis
 - Background papers, Journal Articles
-

(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

- We are very much interested in unadjusted counterparts of tables 7 & 8 of the FT900 release being made available on internet on the day of release. Publications like QFR also need to be made available in spreadsheet or mdb for us to further manipulate data.
- No. Increasingly more and more data sets are becoming available electronically-which makes our work easier by eliminating manual inputing of data.
- Regional retail sales estimates (cancelled after 1996)
- Value of the U.S. apparel protection reported in the CIR - Need URGENTLY!!
- State/MSA non-residential construction data!
- Yes--Need more timely and more defined (i.e.4-digit SIC code) SUB-NATIONAL data.
- Monthly RetailSales is no longer in print-- it is time consuming to get it off the internet because of the download time. It's a waste of valuable research time.
- Retail Trade Monthly - Regional Data Survey - Blue Pages, Building Permits - Non-Resident & Additions.
- Print publications no longer available, yet there is no notice that the print publication will no longer exist. Impossible to find the exact publication on the Internet so clients can compare and update printed data. Current information available but how long will older information remain available?
- Retail sales for Central Business Districts; zip code retail sales, manufacturers, wholesale, etc; zip code housing data including rent and home prices; SIC business fro sip codes.
- No.
- No.
- If I request "personal incom 1989-1992 monthly", the database would show me what I requested data.
- Capital Outlays Quarterly By Industry
- Need updated 1990 Census Data.
- Information on nonresidential construction.
- Printing in ASCII, converted to 6.1. That gives complete graph - 15 columns.
- Need more monthly physical output dat for manufacturing.
- Foreign trade - exports & imports - by 4-digit (data that had been available in "Trades Employment") - without SIC (& soon NAIC), cannot compare trade with domestic activity.
- Data is often no longer available at county or regional level, which is a big loss to local government. If possible, please reinstate (eg. retail sales). Also, no-residential building permits no longer available.
- No.
- No.

- Monthly retail sales were previously available by U.S. region! We need this!
- Selected salaries for selected industries & occupations.
- New remodeling data from American Housing Survey.
- Nonresidential Construction Dollars by STATE Highway Expenditures by STATE data has to be timely.
- MCD Business Patterns, Massachusetts is doing away with county government, MCD income estimates.
- Timely release of data in an easy-to-access format (ie: XLS, 123, etc.) with revisions and option of pulling complete time series.
- Non-residential building permits--number by type of building.
- The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
- We use and would like to continue to use retail sales by county data and the merchandise line sales data.
- We need all stats available for the Jewelry Industry especially by geographic region.
- I'd love to see employment data by SIC based on place of residence. Also wish for reconciliation between RIMS, SIC, & NAICS.
- Int'l trade data on internet are inadequate. Only press releases are there. When data are revised, if data are not in the press release, there is no way to get the revisions (ex: monthly data from exhibits 6&7 of FT900).
- Monthly historical trade data.
- 1) Monthly building permits by states. 2) Retail sales by states & MSA's.
- No.
- We really just want to get the monthly statistics listed in Question #1 timely-- the day they are released/announced to other new agencies.
- Miss the state retail sales numbers.
- Better capital expenditure data and Better motor vehicle data.
- More timely data.
- Non-residential building permits data and value of new non-residential construction part in place.
- Keeping ____ disaggregated data sets ____ possible that are consistent, and therefore directly comparable is very helpful.
- 1) NAICS to harmonized code concordance. 2) Timely plant capacity utilization at greatest detail level possible. 3) Windows version import data/monthly annual easy to use historical with full detail. 4) New Home sales (without land).
- Small area employment (place of work) estimates - current #'s.
- MSA-level data and economic projections. New projections of pollution control expenditures (PACE study)
- Resume geographic estimates of retail sales.
- Annual sales figures for all sales by SIC S962 on all sales through vending (coin operated) machines.
- Commercial Building Permits for MSA's. This program was discontinued by the Census a couple of years ago.
- Retail sales mouth by mouth by major local statistical area.
- Monthly Retail Sales - Nassau-Suffolk, NY MSA (Data Discontinued?)
- YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
- Building permit data at county level from Census web site.
- Would like to have detailed Building permit data on line. Would really like to know which census tracts correspond to zip codes (and counties).
- Commercial Construction Permit Activity
- Some data are not historical enough. Most of the time, I need data as far back as 20-30 years ago.
- Seasonal Population - estimates. More information on affordable housing-market.
- greater back files of data
- Yes-we desperately would like to have monthly dept. store sales data reports re-visited for at least top 25 metros.
- Monthly Retail Sales for U.S. Metropolitan Areas.
- BLS has great site. Well organized. Need to make it easy to find seasonal factors and benchmark.
- current retail sales

- Yes. I have been looking for cost data for pollution data for different pollutants by categories for the last years from 1993 +, but could not.
- Our newsletter goes to many retail CEOs.
- I need quarter-by-quarter growth figures in areas such as sales, inventories, GOP, construction, etc.
- Regional retail sales (metropolitan area) monthly non-residential building permits by metropolitan area monthly.
- Break-out of services components of GDP.
- Pollution abatement expenditures by SIC
- Commercial & industrial building permit activity!
- Business starts by SIC at the County level.
- Two pieces of information that the Census Department had done in the past--metropolitan estimates of retail trade and metro commercial construction permit activity--both annual.
- Up to date residential improvements data garage door 1 garage door openers involved in improvements.
- Want monthly retail trade by state & MSA back.
- Housing stats and completions by state, MSA Value of construction put-in-place by state, MSA
- Quarterly Financial data that separates publishing from printing (SIC 27)
- Yes, Non-residential permits and regional retail sales.
- Using CPS-online. The current terret use does not allow for cross-tabs and sub-group data collection.
- Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
- Better linkage between manufacturing industries and downstream reproducing and distribution. Information pertaining to weights or units with respect to distribution. At processing we measure weights and units. At distribution and are measured. It's discontinuous and you can't measure what the system is doing.
- Our category is part of non-published retail sales. We really need less variable information. Also, we used DMA-level retail sales when it was available.
- Make data reports easier to print off of the web.
- Average expenditures per residential improvement project for single family homes by region. Average value for residential permits by region.
- Move capital expenditure data--more frequent, more detailed
- Service Data on an manual/quarterly/monthly basis by 2,3, & 4-digit SIC!
- Housing Starts by State; Retail Sales by State
- Advanced Retail numbers should have "jewelry stores".
- Website is extremely difficult to navigate.
- Need more timely delivery of C-50 data (Res. Improvements). There is no contemporary measure of remodeling activity.
- Timelines of making data available in the WEB.
- Need detailed PPI data.
- Elimination of Group II sales data and problems
- Regional Retail Sales
- Median income and poverty tables are not in spreadsheet form (they one were).
- Imports and exports by 4-digit SIC. Very important--in print. Publication form--quarterly.
- Current local (county) data on any of the following: retail sales.
- We would like to see more economic data and analyses at the state & MSA level.
- Department store sales
- Census of retail trade 1997 merchandis sales report - need ASAP
- In general, estimates and figures at higher geographic levels, such as block groups or zip + 4's.
- Geographic Area Retail Sales
- Quarterly data, analyzed growth rates for all statistics. Currently, only some of the data is shown as a quarterly growth rate analyzed.
- More Detailed Segmenting
- MSA retail sales
- Monthly service sector sales counterpart data to retail, wholesale, and manufacturing shipments.
- The more detailed (down to specific product line) the better.
- The more history, the better.
- Commercial, Industrial, and other non-residential construction put-in-place!

- Immediate posting of data revisions when significant revisions are undertaken.
- Non-residential construction data outside California! Bring it back!
- Data at the metropolitan area level, e.g. retail sales, commercial building permits (office, industrial, retail).
- We have a need for long historical time series and for long-term forecasts.
- Monthly and annual retail sales for MSA's like you used to collect and publish.
- Bring back retail sales at metropolitan area level.
- Building permits for non-residents.
- Commercial Building Permits County level on a timely basis.
- Census bureau data by county: retail sales, housing starts, manufacturing stats, imports/exports, new home sales.
- As a foreign academic library, we are concerned about cost of access.
- Report on production of industrial fabrics
- Very disappointed that non-residential building permit data is no longer being tracked--our models rely on this!

IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

65.7%; 224 4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
 41.9%; 143 Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
 38.4%; 131 2-digit major groups
 37.0%; 126 3-digit industry groups
 8.2%; 28 NA (don't use SIC-based data)
 3.2%; 11 Other

Replies 341; Forms 366

- 6 TO 10 digit
- digit SIC product codes
- NAICS, Duns' Product Codes
- 7-digit in some cases
- Greater detail when available
- The greatest level available--CIR level. Product level.
- Would like to have 6 or 7 digit SIC
- Don't know
- Only sell the NAICS
- D & B's 2+2 system 8 digits
- Use SIC categories extensively

(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

20.4%; 71 I was unaware of this
 33.3%; 116 I am partially aware, but lack details
 46.3%; 161 I am aware and understand some implications

Replies 348; Forms 366

12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

91.3%;	232	A brochure that explains NAICS	28.0%;	71	Conference announcements
63.0%;	160	NAICS implementation plans	5.9%;	15	Other

Replies 254; Forms 366

- A copy
 - Comparison-SIC VS. NAICS Similar to when SIC definitions change.
 - Send info on NAICS comparability with existing SIC data.
 - Disk that has SIC/NAICS Conversions
 - The reference book of classifications
 - We already have NAICS class. volume.
 - Info on how to reconcile two systems.
 - Contacted by local information office fo Bureau.
 - I am awaiting CD-ROM!
 - We bought the big NIACS book earlier this year--has it been updated?
 - Already know
 - Already have all the information I need.
-

(27) No Thanks -

64.4%;	65	I will check the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/naics)
35.6%;	36	I don't need more information about NAICS

Replies 101; Forms 366

V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

46.2%;	164	Business	5.9%;	21	Media
18.3%;	65	Government	4.8%;	17	Individual
13.5%;	48	Academic/Research	0.8%;	3	Library
7.0%;	25	Association	3.4%;	12	Other

Replies 355; Forms 366

- Information and consulting firm
- Public Business Library
- Quasi-Gov't
- Consulting
- Chamber of Commerce
- Economics Consulting
- Economic Development
- Labor Union
- Library (University)
- University
- Corp. Library
- non-profit trade promotion

(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

30.1%; 105 Yes

69.9%; 244 No

Replies 349; Forms 366

(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

77.5%; 272 None

0.6%; 2 Affiliate Data Center

6.8%; 24 State Data Center

0.6%; 2 State Data Center Affiliate

4.0%; 14 Business/Industry Data Center

0.3%; 1 National Clearinghouse

1.1%; 4 Census Information Center

9.1%; 32 Other

Replies 351; Forms 366

- Affiliate of the State Data Center
 - Philadelphia Regional Office
 - user of Census data
 - Do not understand?
 - State Government Agency.
 - Need statistical info on Jewelry Industry.
 - Special Sworn Employee
 - Federal User
 - City Government
 - Data Center Affiliate
 - Cooperator in disseminating permits authorized data
 - Census Liason
 - Technical Assistance Center
 - Real Estate Advisor
 - Research
 - Provide Census Bureau w/our publication
 - Customer
 - Provider of Business Data to the Census Bureau
 - Affiliate Agency
 - Government
 - Depository
 - BIDD affiliate
 - Regional planning agency.
 - DOC Staff
 - Economist
 - Data use.
 - Sell Census documents
 - GPO Depository
 - Local Census Affiliate
 - Associate Data Center
 - Affiliate
 - Federal Depository Library
-

(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

77.1%; 263 Yes

22.9%; 78 No

Replies 341; Forms 366

(36) Question 21. Remarks:

-
- It would be nice to have all reports available in spreadsheets format. For any publication reports that contain large tables and data, mdb file format would be an ideal too.
 - We greatly appreciate this survey. I'd like to stress one major concern we have: As you move toward complete Internet delivery of data--please continue to publish "hard copies" of the economic reports for us to compare as backup. We have noticed that occasionally there are errors in Electronic Bulletin Board and Internet files--so we rely on the hard copy as backup. We use it as a safeguard. Thank you and feel free to contact me at your convenience.
 - Do not sell/rent my phone # to telemarketers.
 - The computerized data is fine when you know exactly what you want. It is not so good when you want to know what is available and related information; in this case the printed publication e.g. census of Manufactures, is far superior.
 - The library relies heavily on Census data but we have a need for the information in both printed and downloadable (manipulable) formats. The library would purchase both the printed format as well as subscribe to the census website.
 - We would like to be placed on your mailing list to regularly receive the publications as check-marked on the attached listing form.

Sincerely, William A. Rossi

- When we were unable to order with our GPO account #, we lost a lot of time in establishing a Census acct #. I am behind in ordering.

I do not have the hardware at my desk to search on the Web. The public does have workstations. This will hopefully change shortly.

Paper is quicker for us. Print editions. We can in seconds deliver the info to patrons.

- I've been trying to get Census data since 1991. I've used NTDB CD-ROM, StatUSA CD and now the Internet site. As soon as I learn the system really well--you change it. After I loaded the StatUSA CD--The NTDB CD would not work. We need older figures going back to the 1980's. It's impossible to run NTDP, then StatUSA on the same PC. I really hate the StatUSA CD.
- 1). It is important to be able to retrieve data in easy to use formats (spreadsheet or ascii)- "pdf" formats are convenient to print, but difficult to use. 2). Please see question 9. 3). We are concerned about the discontinuity in time series data that will occur with NAICS. The 1987 SIC change was a significant problem--NAICS will likely be much worse. Any help from Census (bridges, publication of data in both classifications) would be a great help to data users.
- I support the move toward Internet data delivery because it should make data available faster and at a lower cost. The challenge is to make it easy for the widest variety of data users as possible to retrieve the data they need.

Example: I use County Business Patterns to track number of establishments for certain industries by state. I believe that users on the Internet currently can select only one year at a time and one state at a time. The ability to put together summary tables based on selections would help a lot.

- I have proposed buying the SIC statute for years with no luck. NAFTA had it come before we could get this done. We now have separate classification just for apparel. It only took 30 years.
- The Bureau of the Census has done a great job with its web sites. With the exception of some unpublished data, everything is available through the internet. The unpublished data is received by direct e-mail.
- In our work with furniture manufacturers and retailers we consistently need breakdowns of mergers, shipments by product classification (ie. bedroom) on a more timely basis & retail sales at a smaller geographic level.
- 1). I cannot say that this is pressing, but I would like to see the results of the state-level retail trade series. 2). I need data files that are easily read into software such as SAS and SPSS. I also tend, when I am looking for something, to require as much history as I can get, because that is what is demanded of me. It would help me a great deal if all federal agencies that release data (especially Census, BEA, and BLS) would release an actual data file (e.g. GDP.DAT rather than GDP. BEA) at the same time as the press release, much as The Federal Reserve does with its industrial production notices. More history data on CD-ROM products, such as USA Counties would

- sometimes be useful as well (say 1940 or 1950 if available).
- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my news off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- When is 1997 Census to be available? Please keep as much of the data in print as possible-- Thanks!
- Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.
- --But please ask for Deborah Foster.

Thank you.

- Documents need to more clearly state whom to contact for follow-up information.
- Thanks for asking!
- Need an index of available information.
- Over the past several months, I have begun to utilize the U.S. Census Bureau's web site, specifically the economic briefing room. I use this information in conjunction with the Kiplinger letter to keep up with marketing analysts. Having the information on the web makes it very easy to access. Thanks!
- The data we are interested in is housing stats, retail sales, etc. For the Jackson, Tenn., area. We compare those with previous months & years and with national averages.
- You have set up an excellent web site that is easy to use, fast and usually supplies me with the information I'm seeking.
- Thank you for your great service!
- The level of detail varies depending on the type of data requested. Mostly county-level data is used because this is what is available.

Although the technology of the internet is available to tie up my phone line browsing for information to print out is very time consuming, whereas a printed report is much easier to access & reference. Not all government entities have the capacity to keep pace with new, faster, computer hardware & software.

- Census data has proven invaluable to in-depth country comparisons of productivity in sectors extremely valuable organization.

Please keep going with the detailed data, comparable time series (IS NAICS comparable?) and aggregate numbers.

- --Strongly support new PACE (Pollution Abatement and Control Expenditures) studies

--New BEA projections are needed (GSP, MSA-level, etc).

- I am probably not typical of you average user. Have 35 years with USDA-limited computer experience--Basically use printed Census data re: population-social conditions-employment income, etc. & cost indexes as I am an economist.

Thanks.

- We use business/commercial statistics when writing market reports. We are not regular users of any of the Census publications, but value them highly in our individual case work.
- Keep up the good work--

1). Does table 3=CPI-U?
on monthly reports?

- Being able to download from the web site has generally worked very well for us. The only troublesome aspect is that the page numbers of the PDF documents differ from the page numbers in their table of contents (e.g. - printing page 18 gets you page 12 of the document).

A big "thank you" to the Census specialists who have been most helpful and polite when we've called with questions.

- We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work

- across many subject. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic medi will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
- Stat-USA is an extremely useful tool for retrieving data. I would like to see more files in spreadsheet format and the ability to download particular segments.
- Census has done a terrific job by putting so much material on the Wed. kepp up the good work.
- Please contact ASAP: Bob Davidson, Gov't Information Service Section Palm Beach county Library System Service

3650 SUMMIT BLVD. 33406
 (561) 233-2600, ext. 164
 email Robert ID@PB.SEFLIN.ORG

- My compliments on you Web Site--easy to use; available data is amazing!
- It's clear to me that there's more usable gov't data to be accessed for site selection and market research needs. We use data vendors typically, by passing much the Census has to offer. Where is the best web site for learning about data sources listed on p.1 of this questionnaire?
- Good job on the web site.
- I believe this survey contains a lot of information to be used.
- I also use the Monthly Labor Review Survey of Business Statistical Abstract
- Retail sic classification need major redo.
- Respondent provided voluminous, illegible comments throughout that could not be deciphered to record.
- I am disappointed that the Census Bureau has cut back on selected metropolitan data services, namely retail sales estimates and commercial building permit activity. While I understood Budget pressures, it seems that lower cost alternative could have been implimented rather that elimination (perhaps annual figures rather that monthly). It is important that the Federal govt. provides timely information that can capture the dynamics of regional growth as well as natural growth on proud level of data services.
- Would be very interested in some information available on the Internet.
- I received the survey on August 7th-so was not able to return it in the time requested!

Our office is very interested in any information on the implementation of NAICS-as our researchers will be using it a great deal.

- We still prefer to have reports generated as a hard copy for our library. If this is no longer possible, an e-mail notification service for new publications available on the Internet would be helpful.
- PDF files are big and we have to retype the data for analysis. Having raw or spreadsheet/database data would save us much time. BLS's web site is a good one to study.
- State and Local Government Finance Estimates, by State. We appreciate having this information on the Internet but wish the report was still published. Is there any way of compiling the data sooner? It is almost too old to be of any use.
- I think that this user survey is an excellent idea; you should poll users periodically.

I would be happy to participate in a users' panel or advisory group.

- Desperately need this information from NAICs. Emerging technology/company information requested everyday.
- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- Tables which have no column headings and which one must consult separate documents are highly confusing.
- I always use your data for the economic releases. My major concerns are: timeliness of data availability on web and being able to print the data from the web without having to reformat printing fonts. I also to the revisions when they come out, but often the location and structure of the revisions is confusing.
- Current setup on the web is extremely frustratingly for someone trying to print/downlad data and

- reports

-> Make .XLS files available with lots of historical data.

___ Use .PDF filrds for pasting your releases -Having to flow ascii into a word processor and reformat is not the way to go. Email sub would be helpful

- I appreciate receiving this survey.
- We're still waiting for an order blank so we can order the 1997 Economic Census.
- Would be helpful if classes were offered in best techniques when seeking govt. data on the Web.

Location on Web tha would state what media given U.S. Govt. was available in (papers, Internet, etc.)

- When converting to NAICS providing 10 years of history would be extremely valuable.
- Please update my address in your records. Thanks!
- I think many users are still going to want the hard copy publications. I know many are available in PDF formats but these are not conducive to shelving.
- I work as a local government long range planner. My duties include socio-economic analysis as requested by the public, politicians and officials. The Census Bureau's Web Site is one of my key resources.
- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- Keep up the good work. I appreciate this survey.
- More documentation and instructions for obtaining data from gohper directories would be helpful.
- I appreciate the value of your service! Educators use information for social profit.
- prefer e-mail
- Keep up the good work.
- I'd like to receive a list of publications at a State Data Center is entitled to receive on the regular basis. I'd also like to get the description for the data we receive.
- Please consider having building permit data on a user friendly CD-ROM.
- Many of your monthly data crimes current, per month of 2 months ago but not year ago. I would be useful to have year ago and /or a full updated file with historical data. For example: new orders, inventories, etc.
- It was a mistake to exclude mobile home permits from your residential permits totals, and a bigger mistake to exclude the non-residential permits.
- I like the fact that the Census Bureau Produces many of is documents in the .pdf format, these are easy to print, bind and archive in our library. However, what is even more important to our firm is the ability to manipulate the data, and easily bring it into a data base or spreadsheet. If I had to choose I would prefer the raw data to the printable format.

I might use more of the data listed in question now that I know it exists.

- Good to see this survey! Dealing with you via the Internet and mail is going well. However, trying to reach people ove rthe phone is still a major headache.
- Glad more of your publications are being made available on the Internet! Suggestion for format of employment data-group by years first, then industry. Is there some alternative for obtaining non-residential building permits.

Figure 1: